

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

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MARKEY QUESTIONS INDEPENDENCE OF DOE SECURITY REVIEW

**Review of nuclear weapons security was performed by DOE contractor that received
\$1.6 million for security in 2001**

Washington, D.C. – Today Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA), a senior Member of the Energy and Commerce Committee and co-chair of the Bipartisan Task Force on Nonproliferation, released a letter to the General Accounting Office (GAO) requesting that it conduct an assessment of the accuracy and objectivity of a recent review of DOE safeguards and security by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). Markey noted that CSIS has been asked to review a report critical of DOE safeguards and security issued by the Project on Government Oversight (POGO.) As a result, it would appear that CSIS has been asked to make judgments about its own work, which has involved a \$1.6 million contract from DOE to perform “specialized security analysis and recommendations” in early 2001.

“I don’t understand how CSIS can be expected to make an objective assessment of the current adequacy of DOE’s safeguards and security when it has been employed by the DOE to perform safeguards and security work since early 2001,” said Rep. Markey. “Essentially, DOE is asking it to review its own work.”

In October 1997 Rep. Markey sent a letter to then-DOE Secretary Federico Pena regarding security at various DOE facilities that detailed the risk of terrorist attacks at many DOE facilities. The letter cited reports of storage of nuclear weapons materials in broken vaults, the possibility that terrorists who gained access to nuclear weapons materials could quickly construct a dirty bomb or crude nuclear weapon that could achieve criticality and produce nuclear yield, reports that anti-government militia groups attempted to recruit members from within the Rocky Flats security guard force, and that DOE personnel downplayed and ignored security risks.

In September, 2001, a report entitled U.S. Nuclear Weapons Complex: Security at Risk by the Project on Government Oversight (POGO) described its eight-month investigation that used unclassified DOE documents to establish that many of the security issues raised in the Congressman’s 1997 letter remained unresolved, and highlighted additional problems with DOE safeguards and security. On January 23, 2002, Rep. Markey sent a letter to DOE requesting information about many of the same concerns highlighted by POGO as well as on a variety of other issues related to security measures taken in response to the events of September 11th.

On February 4, 2002, John J. Hamre, the President and CEO of CSIS, sent a letter to Spencer Abraham, Secretary of Energy, responding to a request that CSIS review the POGO report. The letter concluded that “the risks to DOE and its sites are far more complex and subtle than those posed in the POGO

report,” “the POGO report takes a narrow view of security...” “most of the issues and allegations raised in the report appear to be a recycling of old issues that have passed into irrelevance, been resolved, or been independently reviewed and dismissed,” and that “We met with representatives from the GAO who said they reviewed the POGO report and decided the allegations did not justify further investigation.”

On January 19, 2001, CSIS received a contract worth \$1.6 million from DOE for “specialized security analysis and recommendations.” The POGO report criticized the adequacy of DOE safeguards and security during a timeframe in which CSIS had a contractual relationship with DOE to analyze and make recommendations related to safeguards and security. Rep. Markey’s letter to the GAO asks:

- Whether the conclusions reached by CSIS are supported by GAO’s past extensive analysis of DOE safeguards and security matters.
- Whether GAO believes that CSIS’s previous DOE contracts could compromise its ability to provide an independent assessment of the POGO report (or more generally, the adequacy of safeguards and security at DOE facilities).

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